



Playing with the future

LUNA Park may be 'just for fun' but the more serious topic of *Do Travel Agents Have a*



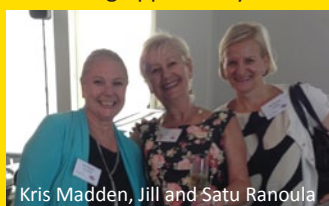
Future was on the agenda when Singapore Airlines manager passenger marketing Australia, Dale Woodhouse spoke to a capacity travel industry audience on Wed this week.

Held at Luna Park, the topic debated at *Travel Daily's* first mini conference, resulted in a resounding YES.

Other high profile industry speakers included Kim McKay from Klick Communications and AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury.

Sponsored by Singapore Airlines, guests later enjoyed a Singapore-themed cocktail party with a range of activities including hand massages, photos with a \$500,000 Lamborghini, rap dancing Singapore-style and a model racecar track - while others took in the spectacular harbour skyline on a Ferris wheel ride courtesy of Luna Park.

As pictured, it was also a great networking opportunity! - Jill.



Kris Madden, Jill and Satu Ranoula

New SCEC logo cause for celebration

THE Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre may be closing in December to allow for the creation of the new Sydney International Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment Precinct, but this hasn't stopped this vital and much utilised facility from celebrating their 25th anniversary with a special logo.

The logo's tag line "25 Remarkable Years", is interpreted in the colours of the existing Centre symbol to present a vibrant reminder of the venue's leadership and achievements since 1988.

Opened by Queen Elizabeth II on 4 May, 1988 as part of Australia's Bicentenary celebrations, the Centre's chief executive Ton van Amerongen said the logo would celebrate a milestone, not just for the Centre but for the entire Australian business events industry.

"The opening of the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre put Australia on the world meetings stage and paved the way for the development of the nation's events industry," van Amerongen said.

"Over the past 25 years, the Centre has made an outstanding economic contribution to the community, both directly through the events we have hosted and



Ton Van Amerongen

indirectly via the industries that have flourished as a result of the events that have been held here.

"Our anniversary is cause for celebration for many different industries as well as the national event sector."

The new logo, he continued, would be used in a range of internal and external communications.

"We have a lot to celebrate and it's particularly fitting that this landmark year is also one of our busiest years on record," van Amerongen added.

Today's BEN issue

BEN today has four pages of editorial plus a full page: [\(click\)](#)

- Mantra Lorne

Wildman Wilderness Lodge reopens

WILDMAN Wilderness Lodge, a two hour drive from Darwin will have a new touring experience when it re-opens during the Easter long weekend.

Guests on the new 90 minute Mary River Wetlands Air Boat Tour that departs from Home Billabong, will be able to enjoy interpretive tours of the unique wetlands biodiversity and wildlife.

Costing \$215 per person with a maximum group of nine, the wetlands teem with wildlife and feature a vast variety of birdlife, freshwater waterways and billabongs that provide a natural habitat for some of the largest salt water crocodiles in Australia and copious barramundi.

To launch the opening of its third season, the Lodge is offering a bonus night free to people who book early.

Book a two-night stay for travel up to 30 June, prior to 31 March and receive the third night free of charge including full breakfast and 3-course dinner daily.

The Lodge offers two accommodation options – 10 eco style cabins or habitats and 15 luxury en-suited safari tents.

For further information on the Lodge see the website at wildmanwildernesslodge.com.au



Malaysia to hold \$million round table

THE Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) Experience, founded in 1927 and also known as The Premiere Association of Financial Professionals, is to be hosted by The Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) in 2014.

Consisting of nearly 36,000 of the world's leading life insurance and financial services professionals, 64% of members are based in the Asia Pacific region.

The event is scheduled to be held from 13 - 15 February 2014 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre with the objective to bring MDRT's Annual Meeting experience to producers in other countries. "This is the first time that the meeting is being

hosted in Malaysia," said Zulkefli Hj. Sharif, ceo.

"We are expecting to welcome approximately 5,000 attendees from 20 countries worldwide to Malaysia in 2014 .

"This event is estimated to generate close to RM50 million in economic impact to the country and RM30 million on visitors expenditure which will highly benefit Malaysia's economy," he continued.

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre's general manager, Datuk Peter Brokenshire expressed, "We look forward to welcoming the world's leading life insurance and financial services professionals to the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre come 2014."

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Mega famil a triumph

SEVENTEEN key business event organisers from around Hamilton and the wider Waikato region were part of a mega famil last week.

Hosted on 20 - 21 February, the famil was a first for Hamilton & Waikato Tourism, designed to showcase the facilities and products that are on offer in the attendees' own backyard.

The key decision makers from corporate companies, government, associations and professional conference organisers, experienced a wide range of MICE-related products including Claudelands Conference & Exhibition Centre, activities at Discover Waitomo (Tourism Holdings Limited), a vintage lunch at Mystery Creek Events Centre and a grand finale event at Hobbiton Movie Set.

Hamilton & Waikato Tourism ceo Kiri Goulter said, "As this type of event has not been available for several years, Waikato organisations may not have had the chance to experience all the fantastic options available right



on our doorstep, so this famil has been the perfect opportunity to really showcase what we have to offer locally."

Hamilton & Waikato Tourism Convention Bureau manager Jenny Tukiwaho Stokes described the feedback from the group as extremely positive with many giving definite consideration for their next event.

Farryn van Hellemond from Livestock Improvement Corporation said of the famil, "Every aspect of the trip was new to me and getting to experience the activities was so beneficial, there is nothing better than knowing first-hand what these are about before referring them."

Aussie chef, Guy Grossi entices PCOs



MORE than 60 professional conference organisers were regaled by renowned Australian chef, Guy Grossi with stories from his recent 7500km journey through Italy.

The exclusive AIME event hosted by IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) on 26 February was held at Grossi's own Merchant Osteria Veneta – one of the restaurants at InterContinental Melbourne, The Rialto.

The evening, entitled 'A Conversation with Guy Grossi' – saw guests treated to a live cooking demonstration where he prepared a traditional fish dish from the Venetian lagoons – one of four courses served throughout the night.

Guests also received a signed copy of Grossi's most recent book, 'Recipes from My Mother's Kitchen.'

Grossi is one of the inspirational speakers available to share experiences and interact with guests, as part of InterContinental Hotels & Resorts' Insider Collection range of event services, exclusive to InterContinental Meetings.

Pictured above from left are: Joerg Boeckeler, general manager, InterContinental Melbourne The Rialto; Jenny Morrell, director of regional sales, Australasia IHG; Guy Grossi and Marcus Tait, director of commercial, Australasia IHG.

And right is Guy Grossi with Rosie Buckley from Conference Resources.



WALES doesn't come front of mind as a beach destination, however, based on reviews on TripAdvisor, the UK country's Rhossili Beach beat off the likes of Hawaii to make it hop into the top 10 beaches in the world list.

The Whitsundays, Lampedusa off the coast of Sicily, the Turks and Caicos are among the top 10.

Ranking third on the website's list of European beaches, Visit Britain say it's not hard to see why Rhossili's beach is so well loved.

"Walking along the clifftops is magnificent, swimming in the clean waters is refreshing, and the Welsh hospitality is known for its warmth."

You can even stay in National Trust holiday cottage the Old Rectory (its most popular accommodation option).

Glanville joins CTM

LIZ Glanville who joined CTM's event travel management team earlier this year, leads the team as operations manager Vic.

Bringing more than 15 years' experience within the corporate sector, she was previously travel manager for high profile corporate clients, as a senior event consultant & most recently as project manager and national manager of meetings, groups and events at a global corporate travel management company where she was part of the team responsible for ASPAC development.

Shangri-La's new gym

THE Shangri-La Hotel, Bangkok has celebrated the reopening of its newly remodeled health club after a major refurbishment costing approximately US\$1.5 million.

Offering more than 8,500 sqft of gym space and more than 50 brand new state-of-the-art fitness facilities; it overlooks the Chao Phraya River through the 11 floor-to-ceiling bay windows.

WIN a two night stay at Spicers Vineyards Estate, Hunter Valley

This week **Business Events News** and the Spicers Group is offering one reader the chance to win a two night midweek stay at **Spicers Vineyards Estate** including breakfast.

Set amongst the vineyards and natural bushland in the Hunter Valley, the estate has recently built four new luxury suites and a day spa facility, creating an exclusive retreat for Executive Meetings and small team Incentives for up to 12 guests.

To enter tell us:
In 25 words or less what is special about Spicers Vineyards Estate?

email:

comp@businessnews.com.au

Hint:spicersgroup.com.au

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inPlace Red Balloon winner



CONGRATULATIONS to Katie Boone, MCI Australia, who is the lucky winner of a \$300 Red Balloon voucher for sending in the most creative answer to inPlace Recruitment's competition in *Business Events News* a few weeks ago.

When asked what office perk would she choose to make her workplace more satisfying and why Boone said: *Gathering colleagues around buffet lunch; The first Friday of every month; A way to meet others, mingle, share; You've created one hell of an*

affair.

The competition provided a lot of good entries with some very creative ideas to perk up the office.

Katie Boone is **pictured** above receiving her prize from inPlace Recruitment's very own Ben Carnegie at AIME last week.

Her entry can also be seen on inPlace's Facebook page at facebook.com/inplacerecruit.

Marina Bay Sands meeting offer

FOR a limited time only, book a meeting package at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands and enjoy up to 40% in savings.

In addition are exclusive room rates from US\$229++ on more than 100 selected dates of this year.

As a bonus if you book now get up to three nights complimentary room stays for the organiser for a site inspection; up to three days complimentary internet access in meeting room for up to 20 users during the conference, and complimentary secretariat room (inclusive of one internet and phone line) for bookings of more than 200 pax and a minimum of three days.

For more information or to make a booking email the resort on sales@marinabaysands.com.

MICE planners set sail



SIXTEEN MICE professionals enjoyed an evening of twilight sailing last week on one of Sailing Sydney's two America's Cup yachts.

Hosted by Tourism Portfolio, the group included corporate meeting planners and professional conference organisers enjoyed Sydney Harbour onboard AUS21, an elegant racing machine built for the 1992 America's Cup in San Diego.

Port Stephens pursues China

DESTINATION Port Stephens, Moonshadow Cruises, Port Stephens Four Wheel Drive and Newcastle Airport are representing Port Stephens in China from 3-9 March - the largest delegation of any NSW region outside Sydney as part of a campaign to capitalise on the booming Chinese travel market, now worth \$1.2 billion to NSW each year.

With China now the second largest visitor market for NSW after New Zealand, and Chinese tourists spending a record 10.4 million nights - \$1.2 billion in NSW last year, Chinese visitor numbers are projected to rise 78% by 2021, according to Destination NSW, which is spearheading the delegation.

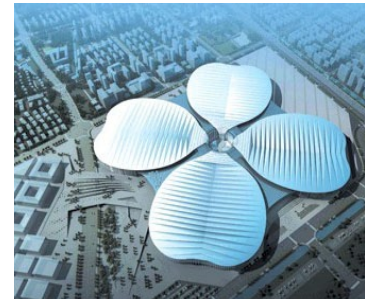
During the visit NSW tourism operators will meet key travel industry representatives and wholesalers in Beijing and also Chengdu - one of the fastest-growing cities in the world.

Destination Port Stephens marketing manager, Tars Bylhouwer, said the beachside destination had been targeting the Chinese market since 1998 when it was the only NSW region that foresaw China's huge growth

potential for the local travel industry.

"Our long-term efforts in China, where we are now regular visitors, are now paying off, with more Chinese travel representatives visiting Port Stephens to plan travel itineraries here and more Chinese tourists - both independent travellers and groups," Bylhouwer said.

Shanghai towers ahead



THE number of construction cranes dotting Shanghai's skyline of 23 million people are a good indication of the changes taking place in this bustling city.

Major projects planned for completion by 2015 include a new Expo hotels project on the site of the 2010 World Expo, mainland China's first Disney Resort and the country's tallest tower and the world's highest hotel.

Also planned for completion within the next three years is the Shanghai Hongqiao Convention and Exhibition Centre, being built at a cost of \$US3.65 billion.

Three times the size of the Shanghai New International Expo Centre, the Convention Centre will have an indoor exhibition space of 400,000 square metres and 100,000 square metres of outdoor space.

"With such high level projects under way, the future looks bright for Shanghai as a truly global centre for meetings, incentives and exhibitions," said Patrick Chen, deputy director of the International Tourism Promotion Department of Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration.

Four hotels- two five-stars and two boutique hotels, include a five star to be managed by Hyatt with between 600 - 650 rooms and suites and the other managed by Conrad Hilton, will offer 300 rooms and suites.



Wolgan's orchestral triumph



THERE was music at the station, for the word had passed around that Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa was holding an exclusive chamber music performance last weekend at the luxury property.

The inaugural music event treated guests to four intimate and unique concerts from Friday evening to Sunday lunchtime.

Led by Paul Goodchild, Sydney Symphony associate principal trumpet, the concerts were performed by some of Australia's most acclaimed classical musicians.

The event received rave reviews from all guests and both Emirates Wolgan Valley and the Sydney Symphony are now planning another special music event later this year.

CONTACT US:

Publisher
Bruce Piper
Editor
Jill Varley
Contributors
Chantel Housler
Advertising:
advertising@businesseventsnews.com.au

P: 1300 799 220
F: 1300 799 221

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1710 Business Events
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Kiwi flies to Australia

TERRI Growcott senior project manager, currently based at Conference Innovators in Christchurch, where she manages large-scale association conferences, is heading across the ditch to take up the position of event manager with ICMS Australasia.



LGNSW in Shoal Bay

SHOAL Bay Resort & Spa (SBRs) is to host the 9th annual Local Government NSW Tourism Conference 2013 taking place on Monday until 13 March.

More than 200 council delegates are expected to attend from across New South Wales to formerly discuss the state's tourism affairs and future outcomes.

Delegates take hit after hit

DELEGATES at the Australian Institute of Conveyancers (AIC) national conference enjoyed an afternoon in the Tassie sunshine listening to the renowned performer Wendy Matthews on the lawns of the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA).

The conference had attracted a record attendance from across the country with a 25% increase in delegate numbers (270, up from 200 in previous years).

"My phone has not stopped ringing after the success of the Tasmanian conference over the past three days" said AIC national secretary Rosemary Cotton, who went on to say that the gala dinner 'Puttin' on the Ritz' which featured a 1930's style musical and theatrical performance was a total show-stopper and exceeded all expectations.

"Tasmania is a brilliant business events destination – the primary venue, the Hotel Grand Chancellor was fantastic - flexible, understanding, obliging and very easy to deal with.

"They offered exceptional service that just quietly went on around us all weekend.

Delegates enjoyed a sunset cruise to Peppermint Bay; a barbeque on the edge of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel; a key note address from Tasmanian speaker Robyn Moore; a gala dinner featuring some of the states finest musicians and entertainers from Island Entertainment; and a concert on the lawns of MONA.

Ballarat Lodge special

REGIONAL Victoria's largest convention centre with plenary space for up to 1000 delegates - Ballarat Lodge, the former Mercure, Ballarat Lodge, has a One Stop Shop, Conference Destination day delegate package of \$59.

With its flexible capacity of 23 meeting rooms and 71 on-site accommodation rooms, together with a range of hotel/motel options within a five minute radius of the property, book a conference dinner and you get half an hour of welcome drinks and canapés.

Stay the night & get 25% off the standard conference room rate.



IMAGINE your next event in a place where delegates can engage, connect and be inspired by a country that has been trading for more than 5,000 years.

Muscat, Oman has emerged as a home for business.

What distinguishes Oman and Muscat in particular, is the easy access to major tourist attractions and the abundance of variety to meet all interests.

Oman, located on the southeast coast of the Arabian Peninsula, has various venues, with almost all hotels offering function space of varying size and facilities.

The new Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre, due for completion in 2016, is set to become an iconic landmark for Muscat and the Sultanate of Oman.

The Centre is only 10 minutes from the new Muscat International Airport.

Located in its own fully integrated precinct with adjoining five-star, four-star and three-star hotels totaling 1,000 rooms, a shopping mall and commercial business park, this world-class facility is architecturally advanced in design and has capacity to meet the rigorous Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Amongst its features are a tiered auditorium seating 3,200 people and more than 22,000 square metres of exhibition space and is perfectly suited to host international, regional and national conventions, exhibitions & business events.

Oman is known for its popular tourist attractions: wadis (river beds), deserts, beaches and mountains, the major shopping malls found in Muscat plus sand skiing, mountain climbing, camel racing and much more.

For more information visit - tourismoman.com.au.

Mantra makes it easier on 12 beachside acres.



Mantra Lorne is now offering FREE WiFi and dinner theming at your next conference.

Mantra Lorne, located on 12 beachfront acres in the iconic Great Ocean Road town of Lorne, is the largest residential conference supplier in regional Victoria. With the ability to cater for up to 520 delegates, Mantra Lorne complements modern amenities with heritage style in a choice of flexible meeting and breakout spaces.

Free WiFi and dinner theming packages start from \$75* per delegate and include various dinner theming options such as Country and Western, 70's Rock N Roll or the elegance of the Oscars.

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